

## Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10  
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06  
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INFO USIA WASHDC

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E.O. 11652: N/A  
TAGS: PINS, PINT, NU, SHUM  
SUBJECT: LA PRENSA DENOUNCES REPORTED STATEMENT BY ASSISTANT SECRE-  
TARY TODMAN

REF: A) MANAGUA 0786, B) STATE 041418

1. IN A FRONT-PAGE EDITORIAL FEB. 16 THE OPPOSITION NEWSPAPER LA PRENSA DENOUNCED AS SUPPORTIVE OF THE "SOMCISTA DICTATORSHIP" THE STATEMENTS ON NICARAGUA BY ASSISTANT SECRETARY TODMAN AS REPORTED IN A UPI STORY OF FEB. 15 (REF A). EMBOFFS HAD URGED LA PRENSA NOT TO TAKE THE UPI STORY AT FACE VALUE AND INFORMED THEM THAT WE HAD REQUESTED VERIFICATION. THE STORY COULD NOT BE VERIFIED BY LA PRENSA'S DEADLINE FEB. 16, HOWEVER, AND THE NEWSPAPER WENT AHEAD AND PUBLISHED THE FOLLOWING EDITORIAL (INFORMAL TRANSLATION):

2. "THE STATEMENTS GIVEN IN NEW YORK BY MR. TERENCE TODMAN, ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INTER-AMERICAN AFFAIRS, REVEAL THAT IN SPITE OF THE HIGH POSITION THAT HE HOLDS, HE IS, TO BEGIN, A POORLY INFORMED FUNCTIONARY. HIS STATEMENTS, BESIDES, SUPPORT THE CRITICISMS THAT HAVE BEEN MADE OF PRESIDENT CARTER'S HUMAN RIGHTS POLICY AS AMBIGUOUS.  
"HIS ASSERTION THAT "SOMOZA HAD PROPOSED A DIALOGUE THAT CHAMORRO  
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HIMSELF HAD ACCEPTED" IS A GREAT UNTRUTH. WE ALL KNOW THAT SOMOZA HAD NOT PROPOSED ANY DIALOGUE. AFTER THE OCTOBER EVENTS (THE FSLN ATTACKS IN SAN CARLOS AND MASAYAL, THE OPPOSITION AND OTHER SECTORS CONCERNED ABOUT THE GRAVE CRISIS THAT THE COUNTRY IS GOING THROUGH PRESSED FOR CARRYING OUT A NATIONAL DIALOGUE AS A MEANS OF ESTABLISHING THE BASIS FOR A PROCESS OF DEMOCRATIZATION. "SOMOZA, AFTER A CALCULATED DELAY, IN ACCORDANCE WITH HIS INTERESTS, ACCEPTED THE

DIALOGUE, BUT IT WAS A FORMALITY, A LIE, BECAUSE AT THE SAME TIME HE IGNORED THE PREVIOUS PETITIONS OF THE OPPOSITION, WHOSE FULFILLMENT WOULD HAVE ESTABLISHED THE MINIMUM BASIS FOR THE DIALOGUE, AND ON THE CONTRARY, HE CONTINUED PERSECUTORY AND REPRESSIVE MEASURES AGAINST THE CITIZENS WHO OPPOSED HIM.

"ON THE OTHER HAND, THE ASSERTION THAT THE FSLN IS THE PROMOTER OF VIOLENCE IN NICARAGUA, WHICH THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY ALLEGED, REVEALS NOT ONLY POOR INFORMATION, BUT AN ERRONEOUS JUDGMENT ON OUR HISTORICAL PROCESS.

"GUERRILLA VIOLENCE IS THE DRAMATIC REACTION OF OUR YOUTH TO THE INSTITUTIONALIZED VIOLENCE OF OVER 40 YEARS OF SOMOCISTA DICTATORSHIP. SOMOZA HAS MAINTAINED ALL THE DOORS CLOSED TO A DEMOCRATIC PROCESS THROUGH PACIFIC MEANS, AND IF MR. TODMAN DOES NOT KNOW OUR HISTORY, HE CANNOT ALLEGE IGNORANCE OF WHAT HAS HAPPENED IN NICARAGUA IN THE LAST MONTH, WHEN SOMOZA REFUSED TO HEED THE LARGEST, MOST CIVIC, PEACEFUL AND ORGANIZED PROTEST IN OUR HISTORY. SOMOZA IS THE PRINCIPAL PROMOTER OF VIOLENCE. AS OUR MARTYRED DIRECTOR PEDRO JOAQUIN CHAMORRO SAID:

"THE INCAPACITY TO SOLVE THE PROBLEMS OF THE COUNTRY AND THE PERSISTENCE OF A REGIME OF INSTITUTIONALIZED VIOLENCE HAS FORCED IMPORTANT CONTINGENTS OF OUR PEOPLE INTO THE ROADS OF REVOLUTIONARY INSURGENCY."

"THE VIOLENCE OF THE FSLN IS NOT THE PRODUCT OF FOREIGN AGENTS OR OF EXOTIC DOCTRINES, AS THE GOVERNMENT PRETENDS IN AN ANGUISHED SEARCH FOR INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION. THE REVOLUTIONARY VIOLENCE OF THE FSLN IS WHAT THE REGIME HAS SOWN. IN THE MEASURE THAT GOVERNMENT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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MENT VIOLENCE WAS INSTITUTIONALIZED, IN THE MEASURE THAT ALL DEMOCRATIC OPPORTUNITIES WERE CLOSED, IN THE MEASURE IN THAT THE PEOPLE, AS THE RESULT OF FRAUDS AND BETRAYALS, LOST FAITH IN DEMOCRATIC PROCESSES, IN THAT SAME MEASURE THE CAUSES OF VIOLENCE BUILT UP."

"THE STATEMENTS OF MR. TODMAN, THEN, ARE SURPRISING, AND WE REJECT THEM, BECAUSE IF NO HONEST NICARAGUAN CAN ASK THAT THE UNITED STATES INTERVENE TO SOLVE OUR PROBLEMS, WE DEMAND THAT (THE U.S.) REFRAIN FROM INTERVENING WITH STATEMENTS--HOWEVER SUBTLE--THAT SUPPORT THE SOMOCISTA DICTATORSHIP."

3. BECAUSE ANTI-SOMOZA ELEMENTS VIEWED THE UPI REPORT OF ASSISTANT SECRETARY TODMAN'S STATEMENT AS POLEMICAL, THE EMBASSY JUDGED IT NECESSARY TO TRY TO SET THE RECORD STRAIGHT WITHOUT AT THE SAME TIME ENTERING INTO A POLEMIC, AND ISSUED THE FOLLOWING PRESS RELEASE BASED ON REF B:

4. LA EMBAJADA DE LOS ESTADOS UNIDOS HA SIDO INFORMADA POR EL DEPARTAMENTO DE ESTADO QUE EL CABLE DE LA UPI CON FECHA 15 DE FEBRERO REPORTA DECLARACIONES ATRIBUIDAS AL SECRETARIO ADJUNTO DE ESTADO PARA ASUNTOS INTERAMERICANOS TODMAN LAS CUALES SON IMCOMPLETAS Y CONTIENEN DISTORCIONES. LA POSICION DEL GOBIERNO DE LOS ESTADOS UNIDOS RESPECTO A LAS CONDICIONES EN NICARAGUA ES LA MISMA EXPRESADA POR

EL DEPARTAMENTO DE ESTADO EN SU COMUNICADO DEL 6 DE FEBRERO Y  
PUBLICADA POR EL SERVICIO CULTURAL E INFORMATIVO DE LA EMBAJADA  
EL 9 DE FEBRERO.  
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## Message Attributes

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**TAGS:** PINS, PINT, SHUM, SOPN, NU, US, LA PRENSA, (TODMAN, TERENCE A)  
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